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ABSTRACT

A chart presents average composite scores on the ACT Assessment by state for 1999 ACT-tested high school graduates. The states are listed in alphabetical order, with the percentage of total graduates tested and the average composite score listed for each state. Also included are the average scores of students who completed the recommended high school core curriculum, average scores of students who have not completed the core curriculum, and average scores of students for whom no course completion data were available. The percentage of students tested varied among the states with as few as 3% of students taking the ACT in three states and as many as 82% of Mississippi students taking the assessment. In Vermont, the average composite score of 22.9 was the highest in the United States. In the District of Columbia, the average score of 18.6 was the lowest in the country. A cautionary note indicates that the list of average scores should not be used for explicit or implicit ranking of the educational systems of the various states because the students taking the ACT may not represent the state's graduates. (SLD)

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ED 434 915

ACT Average Composite Scores by State

1999 ACT Tested Graduates

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Cautions on the Use of State Aggregate ACT Scores

The ACT Assessment comprises four curriculum-based achievement tests designed to assess critical reasoning and higher-order thinking skills in English, mathematics, reading and science. These tests reflect students' skills and achievement levels as products of their high school experience and serve as critical measures of their preparation for academic coursework beyond high school. ACT Assessment results are used by postsecondary institutions across the nation for admissions, academic advising, course placement and scholarship decisions.

The accompanying list of average scores should not be interpreted as providing grounds for an explicit or implicit ranking of the various states' educational systems. Students who take the ACT Assessment are self-selected and do not represent the entire student population. Further, the percentages of students taking the ACT Assessment vary a great deal from state to state, as do those students' backgrounds and characteristics. Many factors--among them, motivation and the desire to learn, parental support, the quality of teaching, socioeconomic status and extracurricular experiences--contribute to individual and group student achievement. However, a core college-preparatory program can be identified as one significant precondition to success on the ACT Assessment and in postsecondary studies. ACT defines a core college-preparatory program as four years of English and three or more years each of mathematics (starting with Algebra I), science and social studies courses.

For a state with a high percentage of ACT-tested graduates, comparing the percentages and average composite ACT scores of the core and non-core completers reveals, in general, large differences in overall student achievement and postsecondary preparation. For a state with a low percentage of ACT-tested graduates, however, the differences between core and non-core completers are not as definitive.

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ACT Average Composite by State
1999 ACT-Tested Graduates

State	Total		Core Completers		Non-Core Completers		No Course Data	
	% of Graduates Tested*	Average Composite Score	% of Total Tested*	Average Composite Score	% of Total Tested*	Average Composite Score	% of Total Tested*	Average Composite Score
Alabama	65	20.2	65	21.4	33	17.7	2	18.4
Alaska	35	21.1	42	24.1	27	20.4	31	17.5
Arizona	28	21.4	70	22.1	27	19.7	3	20.6
Arkansas	69	20.3	74	21.1	21	17.8	6	19.0
California	12	21.3	65	22.1	31	19.6	4	21.3
Colorado	62	21.5	57	22.6	40	20.0	3	20.4
Connecticut	3	21.6	43	22.2	41	20.9	16	21.4
Delaware	3	20.5	62	21.5	34	18.6	5	20.8
Washington DC	13	18.6	64	18.9	23	17.7	13	18.8
Florida	39	20.6	70	21.5	25	18.3	5	19.7
Georgia	16	20.0	76	20.7	20	17.7	5	19.1
Hawaii	18	21.6	69	22.1	26	20.1	5	21.9
Idaho	60	21.4	48	22.6	49	20.2	3	20.8
Illinois	67	21.4	51	22.9	46	19.8	2	20.7
Indiana	19	21.2	62	22.3	33	19.4	5	20.5
Iowa	66	22.0	66	23.0	32	19.9	2	21.4
Kansas	75	21.5	54	23.0	44	19.7	3	19.9
Kentucky	68	20.1	44	21.1	54	19.4	2	19.6
Louisiana	76	19.6	70	20.6	27	17.0	3	19.2
Maine	4	22.1	45	22.7	45	21.9	10	20.5
Maryland	10	20.9	70	21.3	25	19.9	5	20.8
Massachusetts	6	22.0	44	22.3	41	21.9	15	21.7
Michigan	69	21.3	55	22.6	42	19.7	2	20.7
Minnesota	64	22.1	69	22.9	28	20.4	3	21.6
Mississippi	82	18.7	61	19.8	37	16.9	2	18.3
Missouri	67	21.6	61	22.7	36	19.6	3	21.6

* Totals for graduating seniors were obtained from *Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity* 1996-2012, Copyright © by Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, February, 1998.

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1999 ACT-Tested Graduates

State	Total		Core Completers		Non-Core Completers		No Course Data	
	% of Graduates Tested*	Average Composite Score	% of Total Tested*	Average Composite Score	% of Total Tested*	Average Composite Score	% of Total Tested*	Average Composite Score
Montana	54	21.8	56	23.1	41	20.0	2	20.0
Nebraska	73	21.7	67	22.6	31	19.8	2	20.3
Nevada	41	21.5	65	22.3	33	19.9	2	19.9
New Hampshire	5	22.2	55	22.9	38	21.5	8	21.1
New Jersey	4	20.7	34	21.2	59	20.3	7	20.9
New Mexico	64	20.1	53	21.3	43	18.8	3	18.8
New York	14	22.0	63	23.2	30	19.6	7	21.0
North Carolina	12	19.4	64	20.4	32	17.6	4	18.9
North Dakota	79	21.4	63	22.8	35	19.0	2	19.3
Ohio	59	21.4	62	22.6	36	19.5	2	20.7
Oklahoma	69	20.6	52	21.8	45	19.2	3	19.8
Oregon	11	22.6	60	23.7	37	21.0	3	21.3
Pennsylvania	7	21.4	69	22.2	26	19.8	5	19.4
Rhode Island	3	22.7	44	22.6	47	22.9	9	21.8
South Carolina	18	19.1	70	19.9	26	17.1	4	19.2
South Dakota	70	21.2	63	22.3	35	19.4	2	19.7
Tennessee	77	19.9	62	20.9	36	18.2	2	18.9
Texas	31	20.3	70	21.2	27	18.2	3	19.1
Utah	68	21.4	43	22.4	55	20.6	3	21.1
Vermont	9	21.9	45	22.5	40	21.1	15	22.3
Virginia	7	20.6	67	21.3	25	19.2	7	19.8
Washington	18	22.6	56	23.4	41	21.5	2	22.0
West Virginia	58	20.2	43	21.4	56	19.3	2	18.7
Wisconsin	67	22.3	61	23.1	36	21.0	2	21.8
Wyoming	66	21.4	54	22.6	44	20.1	2	20.2
National	**36**	**21.0**	**60**	**22.0**	**36**	**19.4**	**4**	**20.2**

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